

## Seventh generation nostalgia

[Adnan Riaz](#) reminisces about his most memorable experience from the high-def era of console gaming

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Photo credit: Fabio Santana

The seventh generation of consoles featured a collection of unique titles which left a memorable experience. *The Last of Us*, *Gears of War* and *BioShock* would be high on the list for most individuals: and rightly so, they were ground-breaking for their accomplishments.

However, the title which I selected is *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots*. What can I say about this title that has not already been said; well, I consider it to be a masterpiece from director Hideo Kojima. This was the title which helped bolster the PlayStation 3's reputation in 2008 with its release and became a core exclusive for the console.

With Kojima preparing for the release of *Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes* – the next chapter in his illustrious series – it is well worth me looking at the title which was particularly influential in my experience from the seventh generation of consoles. *MGS4* brought with it a whole host of new innovations to the *Metal Gear Solid* franchise and delivered an emotional conclusion in Solid Snake's final mission.

For me, Hideo Kojima is one of the finest minds in the gaming industry. It is hard to believe that he struggled early in his career and even contemplated the idea of leaving the industry. In 1987 he released *Metal Gear*, and the rest is now history. Legendary, brilliant, respected and often controversial, these would be the words which are associated with his reputation.



Photo credit: Marques Stewart

With *Metal Gear Solid* being an influential title early in my gaming experience, it really changed my perceptions on video games and the industry. So by the time 2008 had arrived, I was waiting for the opportunity to see what Kojima was capable of delivering with the fourth instalment in Snake's story.

Mission after mission I was completely captivated in the experience. The balance between familiar characters from the series and new faces really helped to build an interesting and engaging narrative. Graphically, the title was phenomenal, with it pushing the PlayStation 3's hardware to the limit – this included the additional installation before the title even loaded. Snake's movement across the continents – from the Middle East to South America – really tested the player's ability to adapt in certain scenarios. Snake would have his own mission whilst open-conflict was taking place between a private military company (PMC) and local militia, with the opportunity to be involved down to the player's decision – entering the battle would offer certain perks.

Kojima's willingness to experiment with the gameplay in the franchise distinguishes each title for their unique development. *MGS4* retained the stealth mechanics from the series – changing and developing them at the same time – but offered a more hands on approach for people who were not fond of sneaking. Jumping into a new *Metal Gear Solid* title, the experience is bound to be completely different from the previous instalment in the franchise.

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“And he who controls the battlefield, controls history”  
”

The factor which made *MGS4* my favourite title was certainly the story. With a theme that situated around the war economy, it added an interesting and dynamic scenario to the title – even tying in as a crucial plot point. Growing up with the franchise, Kojima made sure that Solid Snake's story was completely finished and offered a compelling adventure with the series protagonist. *MGS4* brought some nostalgic moments from the franchise which made the experience exciting from beginning to end. From Snake's return to Shadow Moses Island to the final confrontation with Big Boss, it was the title which reinforced why I consider *Metal Gear Solid* truly deserves its place as one of the greatest series in gaming.

Spending so much time fighting Metal Gear – a nuclear equipped walking battle tank – it was incredible to actually take control of one. However, the final battle between Snake and Liquid Ocelot was one of the best moments from the entire title. Kojima built up this final confrontation with an excellent cinematic, leaving me in awe even before the battle took place. Furthermore, the fight featured music and health bars from each of the *Metal Gear Solid* titles (1-4), adding to the nostalgia which Kojima continued to offer

in Snake's final mission. It was the experience which has stuck with me ever since, and during the time it had me jumping up and down with my Dual Shock 3 controller, reinforcing how much I love being a gamer.



I know that it would be hard for some people to pinpoint the title which could define an entire generation of gaming experience, but for me, *MGS4* was more than capable of achieving this feat. It was a title which was so well polished that when I play it now on my PlayStation 3, the graphics are capable of matching some of the latest titles released – especially when you consider it was released so early in the console's system cycle.

*MGS4* was more significant because this was the series I grew up with, so Snake's journey was one which I had continued to witness and it was emotional in its conclusion. With *MGS4* offering me such an incredible experience, my expectations are high for Kojima's return with *Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes* and *Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain*.



## One comment

no

8 Feb '14 at 11:27 am

*MGS4* has its moments but I can't appreciate a "game" when it spends more time in lengthy, exposition-driven cutscenes than in actual gameplay. Kojima should just be directing films.

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